

Shield

a second metallic coating covering the surface of the support in a region corresponding to the decorative pattern, the second metallic coating being formed of a maximum of $n-1$ layers of metal;

wherein the object includes an outer surface facing away from the support, the outer surface comprising an outer metallic layer of the first metallic coating and an outer metallic layer of the second metallic coating, the outer metallic layer of the first metallic coating having at least one of a color and an appearance differing from that of the outer metallic layer of the second metallic coating.

REMARKS

Claims 1-24 are pending in the application. By this Amendment, claim 1 has been amended. Prompt examination and allowance of this application are respectfully requested.

Claims 14-21 have been withdrawn from consideration by the Examiner. Applicants maintain their traversal of the Restriction Requirement for the reasons set forth in the Preliminary Amendment and Response to Restriction Requirement filed on September 26, 2002. Regarding the restriction between Groups I and II, the Examiner continues to apply the wrong test to establish a proper intermediate-final product restriction. The Examiner's assertion that "Applicant has not shown that the intermediate product in the relationship of Inventions I and II cannot be used to make a different final product, such as a decorative object" is completely irrelevant in establishing the required "mutually exclusive species relationship," as set forth in M.P.E.P. § 806.04(b). Accordingly, Applicants repeat their request that the Examiner at

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least modify the restriction requirement so that the intermediate-final product restriction requirement would be withdrawn.

Claims 22-24 were added to this application in the Preliminary Amendment and Response to Restriction Requirement filed on September 26, 2002. Those claims also were identified by Applicants as corresponding to the elected claims for prosecution. Since claims 22-24 were neither withdrawn nor rejected in the Office Action dated December 5, 2002, Applicants understand that claims 22-24 are allowable.

Claims 1-4 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection. Contrary to the Examiner's assertions, claim 1 does not require a recitation of a maximum number of superposed layers of metal. Furthermore, it is clear that the variable "n" is used consistently in the claim.

Regarding claim 2, Applicants submit that the language is definite.

Regarding claim 3, the term "zamak" or "zamac" is a commercial name for a zinc-based alloy with aluminum, magnesium, and copper.

Regarding claim 4, Applicants submit that the term "filled" has art-recognized meaning.

For the reasons set forth above, the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, should be withdrawn. If any of those rejections are maintained, Applicants respectfully request a more detailed explanation.

Claims 1-3 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over U.S. Patent No. 5,505,320 to Burns et al. ("Burns"). In addition, claims 1, 2, and 4-13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 4,445,982 to Royer

("Royer") and claim 3 was rejected under § 103(a) over Royer in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,525,421 to Knoerzer ("Knoerzer"). Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections.

Burns does not disclose or suggest, *inter alia*, an object having an outer surface facing away from a support, wherein the outer surface comprises an outer metallic layer of a first metallic coating and an outer metallic layer of a second metallic coating, as recited in amended claim 1. To the contrary, Burns discloses a coated substrate having an outer surface that includes a copper layer 3 and a polymer layer 5 that face away from a substrate 1. The outer surface of the coated substrate does not include outer metallic layers of first and second metallic coatings, as recited in claim 1. Accordingly the § 102 rejection of claim 1 should be withdrawn.

Royer does not disclose or suggest, *inter alia*, a first metallic coating formed of at least n superposed layers of metal, wherein $n \geq 2$, and a second metallic coating formed of a maximum of $n-1$ layers of metal, as recited in claim 1. Instead, Royer discloses a process including silver-plating a body of an object, machining the principal surfaces of the silver-plated body, and gold-plating the machined surfaces. Col. 2, line 57 to col. 3, line 4. Thus, the machined surfaces include a gold-plating on the body, and not a gold-plating on the silver-plating. See, e.g., Royer, claim 1. Consequently, the object disclosed in Royer includes a surface portion with silver-plating and a surface portion with gold-plating. Royer does not disclose or suggest a surface portion with more than one layer of metal. Therefore, Royer does not disclose or suggest a first metallic coating formed of at least n superposed layers of metal, wherein $n \geq 2$, and a second metallic coating formed of a maximum of $n-1$ layers of metal, as recited in claim 1.

Knoerzer does not overcome the above-noted deficiencies of Burn and Royer, and is not relied upon in the Office Action for such disclosure. Accordingly, Applicants submit that the § 103 rejection of claim 1 should be withdrawn.

Claims 2-13 depend from independent claim 1, and are therefore allowable for at least the same reasons claim 1 is allowable. In addition, each of the dependent claims recites unique combinations that are neither taught nor suggested by the cited art, and therefore each are separately patentable.

The Office Action contains characterizations of the claims and the related art with which Applicants do not necessarily agree. Unless expressly noted otherwise, Applicants decline to subscribe to any statement or characterization in the Office Action.

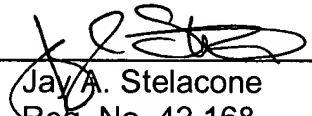
The Examiner is invited to call the undersigned at (202) 408-4252 if the Examiner deems that a telephone conversation would further the prosecution of the application.

If there is any fee due in connection with the filing of this Amendment, please charge the fee to our Deposit Account No. 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: March 5, 2003

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APPENDIX TO AMENDMENT OF MARCH 5, 2003
VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Amended) An object including at least one decorative pattern, the object comprising:

a support formed of molded material;

a first metallic coating covering at least part of a surface of the support, the first metallic coating being formed of at least n superposed layers of metal, wherein $n \geq 2$, the first metallic coating at least partially delimiting a decorative pattern; and

a second metallic coating covering the surface of the support in a region corresponding to the decorative pattern, the second metallic coating being formed of a maximum of $n-1$ layers of metal;

wherein the object includes an outer surface facing away from the support, the outer surface comprising an outer metallic layer of the first metallic coating [has] and an outer metallic layer of the second metallic coating, the outer metallic layer of the first metallic coating having at least one of a color and an appearance differing from that of [an] the outer metallic layer of the second metallic coating.

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